

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of the claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended) A large optically switched communication network comprising:

- (A) a plurality of at least ~~20~~ 250 area code nodes;
- (B) a network of optical fibers each defining a communication bandwidth of at least 15,000 GHz per fiber;
- (C) a plurality of dense wavelength division multiplexing components for providing at least ~~400~~ 300 spaced apart wavelength communication channels through each optical fiber in said network of optical fibers;
- (D) a plurality of processor controlled optical switches located at each of said area code nodes;
- (E) a plurality of processors, said plurality of processors being programmed with a routing algorithm for controlling said optical switches to permit a plurality of single wavelength communication links through said network of optical fibers from each of said plurality of area code nodes to every other one of said area code nodes; and
- (F) at least one optical signal generator for generating a plurality of narrow band optical reference frequency signals and a plurality of optical subfrequency signals, said optical subfrequency signals defining ~~each of said at least 400~~ six subfrequency wavelength communication channels, each of said at least six subfrequency communication channel having bandwidths of at least 2.4 GHz;
- (G) a plurality of narrowband tunable filters located at the area code nodes to isolate selected wavelength communication channels from other wavelength communication channels; and
- (H) a plurality of electro-optical modulators to modulate user data onto said network of optical fibers at wavelengths within selected subfrequency wavelength communication channels;

wherein each communication link in each of said communication channels from each area code node to every other area code node within the network is routed without a change in wavelength and without optical-electrical optical conversion; and
wherein said routing algorithm is an algorithm adapted to utilize a requirements matrix and an allocation matrix in order to assign wavelength communication channels to avoid collisions.

Claim 2 (cancelled)

Claim 3 (cancelled)

Claim 4 (cancelled)

Claim 5 (cancelled).

Claim 6 (previously presented) A large optically switched communication network as in Claim 1 and also comprising a plurality of detectors located at said area code nodes adapted to extract user data by interfering filtered data fiber signals with filtered reference fiber signals

Claim 7 (cancelled)

Claim 8 (cancelled)

Claim 9 (previously presented) A large optically switched communication network as in claim 1 wherein said network is adapted to provide between 10 and 100 MHz of bandwidth for each individual user.

Claim 10 (previously presented) A large optically switched communication

network as in claim 1 wherein said network is adapted to provide about 25 MHz of bandwidth for each individual user.

Claim 11 (previously presented) A large optically switched communication network as in claim 1 wherein said plurality of narrowband optical reference frequency signals are at a standard dense wavelength division multiplexing frequency spacing of 50 GHz.

Claim 12 (previously presented) A large optically switched communication network as in claim 11 wherein each of said plurality of narrowband optical reference frequency signals is associated with seven optical subfrequency signals defining six wavelength communication channels.

Claim 13 (previously presented) A large optically switched communication network as in claim 12 wherein said seven optical subfrequency signals are at a frequency spacing of about 4 GHz.

Claim 14 (cancelled)

Claim 15 (cancelled)

Claim 16 (previously presented) A large optically switched communication network as in claim 1 wherein at least a portion of said user data is carried over coaxial cable between users and an electro-optic modulator associated with said area code nodes.

Claim 17 (currently amended) A method of providing nation scale communications with individual channels allocated to individual communications links, said method comprising the steps of:

(A) providing a communication network comprising:

(1) a plurality of more than 250 ~~20~~ area code nodes;

(2) a network of optical fibers each defining a communication bandwidth of at least 15,000 GHz per fiber;

(3) a plurality dense wavelength division multiplexing components for providing at least 100 wavelength communication channels through each optical fiber in said network of optical fibers;

(4) a plurality of processor controlled optical switches located at each of said area code nodes;

(5) a plurality of processors, said plurality of processors being programmed with a routing algorithm for controlling said optical switches to permit a plurality of single wavelength communication links through said network of optical fibers from each of said plurality of area code nodes to every other one of said area code nodes wherein said routing algorithm is an algorithm adapted to utilize a requirements matrix and an allocation matrix in order to assign wavelength communication channels to avoid collisions;

(6) at least one optical signal generator for generating a plurality of narrow band optical reference frequency signals and a plurality of optical subfrequency signals, said optical subfrequency signals defining ~~each of said~~ at least 400 six subfrequency wavelength communication channels six subfrequency wavelength communication channels, each of said at least six subfrequency communication channel having bandwidths of at least 2.4 GHz;

(7) a plurality of narrowband tunable filters located at the area code nodes to isolate selected wavelength communication channels from other wavelength communication channels; and

(8) a plurality of electro-optical modulators to modulate user data onto said network of optical fibers at wavelengths within selected subfrequency wavelength communication channels; and

(B) utilizing said network to route each communication link from each area code node to every other area code node within the network without a change in wavelength and without optical-electrical optical conversion.

Claims 18 through 28 (cancelled)